distely began to complain of the house. The wet came in at the door of the *only room*, and when it rained, through every part of the roof also, except just over the hearth-stone; large drops fell upon her as she was lying in bed, or working at the window; and, in short, she had found it impossible to keep things in order, so had gradually ceased to make any exertions. Her condition had been borne down by the condition of the house. Then her husband was dissatisfied with his home and with her; his visits became less frequent, and if he had been a day labourer, and there had been a beer-shop or public-house, the preference of that to his house would have been inevitable, and in the one instance would have presented an example of a multitude of cases. She was afterwards, however, removed to a new cottage, which was water-tight, and had some conveniences, and was close to the road which her former mistress and all her friends must constantly pass along. She soon resumed, in a great degree, her former good habits, but still there was a little of the *dawdle* left about her, the remains of the dispiritedness caused by her former very unfavourable circumstances." Another instance he relates of a female who had been brought up as a servant in a well-ordered house, and who, for her station, had received a very excellent religious and moral education. Before her marriage she had been distinguished by the refinement with which she sung national airs, and for her knowledge of the Bible and of the doctrines of her church. Her personal appearance had now become, however, of a piece with the wretched stone, undrained hovel, with a pig-sty before it, in which she had been taken. With the men as well as with the females, the wretched condition of the tenements formed a strong barrier against personal cleanliness, and the use of decent clothes.

On the above subject I may refer to some remarks made on the habitations of the lower orders in Paris, contained in "Classes Dangereuse," tom. 2, p. 126. It is remarked there that "the labouring classes are obliged to live in houses almost always dilapidated, insufficient, or unhealthy. Such is the lot of the poor man in all countries; the force of circumstances, the hard law of necessity, compel it. Yet, if it is impossible to remedy completely this state of things, may we not approximate to it, by building houses for every grade of the lower orders, not only of the lowest poor, but of the debased and depraved? It appears to me that these houses would have a double advantage: they would diminish the causes of public insalubrity, and offer to the honest and economical workman the means to procure a residence equal to his necessities, and capable of producing in him the taste for retirement and domestic peace so favourable to morals. It is especially in this last point of view that the amelioration of the dwellings of the poor and laborious class is to be ranked among the preservatives against vicious habits." This report goes on further to state that "rent being one of the most important and indispensable domestic expenses, the father of a family, pressed by other wants of the same necessity, naturally seeks the least costly habitation. These exist only in certain quarters and certain streets of those quarters; they are old, ruined, and filthy. The proprietors, in order to tenant them, let the lodgings very low, and thus attract the poorer families. If these lodgings were healthy and sufficient for all the members of the family, there would be no room for censure, but they are foul, badly lighted, and neither air-tight nor water-tight. They are small, and as parents and children sleep in the same room, the over-crowding is both a cause of unhealthiness and an offence against good morals. Moreover, the bad state and filth of the passages, privies, and sinks give rise to infectious exhalations, which vitiate the air of these humble abodes, and affect the health of the inhabitants in a manner so much more mischievous, that the greater part of them work all the day in crowded and ill-ventilated shops."

It is to be regretted that we have no such accurate statistical details of the condition of the poor in the metropolis as distinguish many of the reports from the country. But the condition of the dwellings of the poor in London is little different, unhappily, from those of the country. Forced from the nature of their occupations to lodge in central districts, and from the high charge of rent compelled to put up with one room, in which all culinary processes are performed, it is alike the kitchen, parlour, and bedroom of a whole family. I speak now of even the higher classes of the poorer population, men who are in the receipt of superior wages. On this subject the Leeds report justly says: "It must be manifest that one sleeping-room, though it may be quite sufficient for a young couple, must be very inadequate to a family of five persons, or oftener eight. It is no sufficient answer—in fact it is an answer founded in error—that with the increase of a poor man's family his means of affording them accommodation increase. On the contrary, an operative is almost at the head of his wages when he becomes a house-keeper and married; and if his means are then inadequate to pay the rent of a home with two sleeping-rooms, they rarely or ever become so. The wages of children, added to the common stock, are more than consumed in food and clothes, during the earlier periods of life and parental control. At the period when it is essential that the separation of the sexes should be enforced, there is often the least ability to effect it; and thus in the houses of the working classes, brothers and sisters and lodgers of both sexes are found occupying the same sleeping-room with the parents, and consequences do occur which humanity shudders to contemplate. It is but three or four years since a father and daughter stood at the bar of the Leeds sessions as criminals, the one in concealing, and the other in being accessary to concealing, the birth of an illegitimate child, born on the body of the daughter by the father; and now, in November, 1841, one of the registrars of Leeds, has recorded the birth of an illegitimate child, born on the body of a young girl only sixteen years of age, who lived with her mother, who cohabited with her lodger, the father of this child, of which the girl had been pregnant five months when the mother died."* Instances of this kind might be given in the most sickening and painful succession from these reports, and unhappily cases of a similar description are too numerous in the metropolis.

The report from the town of Manchester, by Dr. Richard Baron Howard, shews the deplorable condition of that town in 1832, which now represents its state as faithfully as it did then. Of 687 streets inspected, 248 were reported unpaved, 53 partially paved, 112 ill ventilated, and 352 containing heaps of refuse, stagnant pools, ordure, &c. The number of houses inspected was 6,951, of which 2,565 were reported as requiring white-washing, 960 requiring repair, 939 in which the soughs required repair, 1,435 damp, 452 ill-ventilated, and 2,221 were reported as wanting privies. The state of some of the streets and courts examined was found by the inspectors abominable beyond description, and exhibited a melancholy picture of the filthy condition and unwholesome atmosphere in which a large portion of the poor are doomed to live. In some districts the sewers were in a most wretched state, and quite inadequate to carry off the surface water, whilst the privies were in a most disgraceful state; inaccessible from filth, and too few for the accommodation of the number of people, the average number being 2 to 250 people. The reports next alludes to the inhabitants of cellarage—a species of accommodation happily next to unknown in London. The interior of the dwellings accurately correspond with the filthy condition of the exterior, and present every indication of negligence, slovenliness, and discomfort. The wretched occupants of these miserable abodes, as might be expected, are grossly negligent of personal cleanliness, and what with deficiency of food, clothing, and bedding, have altogether a squalid and unhealthy appearance; the natural consequence of living amidst such fertile sources of disease. It is in loathsome and pestiferous localities like these that disease rages in all its malignancy and power; that contagion seizing victim after victim, commits, unchecked, its dreadful havoc, and the average duration of life allotted to man is so lamentably curtailed. Here the services of the medical officer of the infirmary and various dispensaries are principally required, and it is amidst such melancholy scenes that he, more than others, becomes acquainted with the hidden sufferings, miseries, and almost incredible destitution of his fellow-creatures. In his daily visits to these neglected haunts of disease and wretchedness, he seldom encounters an individual but the indigent inhabitants themselves; except perhaps the parish overseer, and haply some minister of religion in the exercise of his sacred office, endeavouring to afford religious comfort to some suffering mortal, whose last moments in *this* world, hastened by the pestilential atmosphere in which he has lived, and the privations he has endured, are drawing to a close. Would that the condition of the poorer classes in the metropolis had been described by such equally energetic and graphic pen, to rouse up the spirit of philanthropic exertion towards their benefit. Unhappily it would be found that the picture was not overdrawn, as many neighbourhoods in and near Buckeridge Street,* St. Giles'; Wentworth Street, Whitechapel; Field Lane, and Saffron Hill, Holborn; Golden Lane, St. Luke's; Charles Street and King Street, Drury Lane; the Almonry and Orchard Street in Westminster; the Mint in Southwark, and many other vicinities would testify.

* In earlier life, when attending my duties in connection with the medical profession, my attention was painfully drawn to a circumstance in this street, observing the utter want of decency in its inmates. I had occasion to attend the accouchement of an Irish female of the poorest class, in a room inhabited by three families. On my arrival, although the pains of labour had commenced, two men were sitting unconcernedly smoking their pipes, and it was only on my stating that I should withdraw if they did not, that they left the room.

In the external position of houses, one important consideration is, that of the means of proper ventilation. In the larger streets inhabited by the poor, the houses have the advantage (if limited as it is, it may be called so) of a small back-yard; but thanks to the wisdom of the legislature, means will in future be provided for the more effectual preservation of health. Dr. Duncan, in his report of the sanitary state of the residences of the labouring classes in the town of Liverpool, divides the dwellings of the working population into three great classes, 1. Those inhabiting courts. 2. Residents in cellars; and 3. Those inhabiting houses or rooms in front of the street. Of the 175,000 individuals of the working classes, he estimates that nearly one-half inhabit courts, which consist of two opposite rows of houses each containing from two to six or eight, separated from the opposite row by an intervening space of from six to fifteen feet in width. The Manchester report, in allusion to courts, laments that the same crowding and ill planning of houses which is seen in the older parts of the town, which were erected long before the advantages of a copious supply of fresh air to the human constitution was known, should still continue to be imitated in the cottages of the poor. It remarks, that the practice of building houses at the backs of those fronting the street, with only an extremely narrow passage intervening, and the doors of the former opening directly opposite the privies and uncovered cesspools of the latter, is still shamefully common. Dr. Baker, in his report on Derby, states the principal faults of the courts are want of space, a narrow entrance, often no wider than an ordinary house door, want of pavement, and numerous filthy privies. Moreover, the courts and alleys which contain the worst description of houses, or which are most objectionable as to situation, are sure to be tenanted by persons who are dirty, reckless, and improvident. The inmates of courts, by herding together, countenance and encourage each other in their faults; for being alike withdrawn from observation and the influence of good example, they are neither shamed out of what is reprehensible nor stimulated to improvement." The advantages of ventilation are so well known that I consider any further observations will be unnecessary. In what way this can be best effected, what will be its influence upon the general health of the inmates, and in what manner it has eradicated and will prevent many diseases, I shall explain in my next letter.

I shall conclude this, I fear, prolix communication with an interesting extract from the "Report on the condition of the residences of the labouring classes in the town of Leeds, by Robert Baker, Esq." He says:—"One cannot but notice the moral and social, as well as physical effect, which an attention to the architecture and order of cottage houses, and the good arrangement of the streets, has upon the health and habits of the people. In the Bank in Leeds, a part of the East Ward, in which there is every variation of size and order of cottage dwellings, there is a large population, located under a good landlord, who has erected his houses upon a good plan, with a due regard to the wants and requirements of his tenantry, with a due share of out-houses and other accommodation, and with streets well paved and sewered; he has very rarely any houses to let. *The whole estate bears upon the face of it comfort and enjoyment. Every house is clean and neat, and tenanted by a respectable occupier. This landlord can have a selection of tenants, who account it a favour to obtain one of his houses, and his rents are regularly paid almost to a farthing. There are no violations of decency to be seen here, and no disturbances or assemblies of Sabbath-breakers*: whilst on the other hand, in the lower parts of the same ward, with effective means of drainage and pavement, are to be found houses occupied by tenants shadowed down through every grade. Here, with the walls unwhitewashed for years, black with the smoke of foul chimneys, without water, with corded bedsteads for beds, and sacking for bedclothing, with floors unwashed for year to year, without out-offices, and with incomes of a few shillings a week, derived from the labour of half-starved children, or the more precarious earnings of casual employment, are to be found within what seem the dross of society, but are human beings withal, existing from hour to hour, under every form of privation and distress." These observations will, I think, confirm the truth of my opinion, that whilst superior tenements for the accommodation of the poorer classes would be remunerative to the philanthropist or the builder, who might undertake the same as a speculation, they would be materially beneficial to the social and moral condition and habits of the poor.

In connection with the subject of their houses, I will next week make some observations regarding the want of water, as a necessary to cleanliness; privies, drainage, paving, &c.; and beg to remain, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

ABRAHAM BOOTH, Chemical Engineer, &c.
2, Upper St. Martin's-lane, June 28, 1843.

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